Herskovits & Herskovits B-5 (1933-1938) 1934
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604 428 brothers and to his sisters' children. That is how we live here in the bush. That is how we do."

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591 When a man marries, he either arranges to take his wife to live in his own village—his mother's village—or to stay in that of his wife. Whether he chooses the one village or the other, he has to build a house there for her, and this becomes her *wosu*, her household. If he wishes, he may build two houses, one in his own village, and one in the village of his wife. Kasanya's younger brother built two houses for his first wife. One was on the lower river, next to Kasanya's own house, and the other we would reach after two days' further travel up the river.

Yet the man, explained Kasanya, if the couple were living in the village of the wife, or the woman, if their house was in his village, was not entirely at home. In one's own village a person was a *gomi*, a child of the "ground." He belonged there. But when living in another's village, even though it was that of a husband or wife, one was a [609] *wakama'*, a stranger, and if a man of the village but uttered this word "wakama'" to such an individual, the outsider had to take up his belongings and leave at once. Were the [688] stranger, in turn, to speak aloud the word "gomi," disaster would follow, for the earth spirits, having been disturbed, would be sure to take their toll.

• 594 The *wosu*—the household—is the unit of family life, whether, in its physical location, it is in one village or two villages. In it a woman lives with her husband, and here the 596 children are reared. After the wosu comes the larger family unit, the *mbe*, composed of those who have come from the [614] common womb of a more remote ancestress, while several of these larger or extended families form a clan.

"If a man has more than one wife," said Kasanya, "then 595 he makes more than one house. A man never puts two wives in the same house. It would not be good. Each woman has her own house, where she lives with her children. It must be so. The children of the first wife belong to her

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Chapter Eight

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

THE Bush Negro family is not a family in our sense of the word. In the Surinam jungle the Djuka family is polygamous and matrilineal. The unit of society is the hut, where the mother and her children live.

In order to understand the marriage customs of the Bush Negro tribes it is first necessary to forget for the time being the system of patriarchal family life under which the white men of our age live. One unconsciously takes the customs of one's own society as a norm, and passes moral judgment on exotic customs by their deviation from that norm. This habit of thinking must be avoided as far as possible in considering a primitive society, though it is difficult even for an agile mind to make dispassionately the transition from one culture in which the father is dominant, to another, in which his position is not important. On the other hand, many of our

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